



Brevard Innovative Charter Schools
Emergency/Special Meeting
September 1, 2021
7:00am

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:04am by Chairman Gary Boyer.

ROLL CALL

The following members were in attendance: In person – Gary Boyer, Jackie Flynn, Scott Gaenicke, Teacher Representative Becky Schell, and Reneé Bernhard; Virtually – Theresa Murphy, Patricia O’Sullivan, and Steve Richardson.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

A motion was made to adopt the agenda as presented (Gaenicke/Flynn). Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Speakers – in order of appearance:

1. Jessica Csorba – did not speak due to technical difficulties
2. Tom James – Masks voluntary; do no harm
3. Jenny Puzino – Masks voluntary; hard on kids
4. Felicia Abad – Masks voluntary; our job to raise kids
5. Chloe Kirk – Masks voluntary; masks made me nauseous
6. Maddie Still – Masks voluntary; last year was difficult
7. Shawna Carter – Masks voluntary; made son sweat
8. Jeremy Kaminsky – Pandemic is a coverup to control the earth (anti mask)
9. Lindsay Buckmaster – Masks voluntary; parents should make this choice
10. Miguel Patrick-Masks voluntary; children don’t wear masks correctly
11. Michelle Bennett-Masks voluntary; masks ineffective in lessening viral curve

ACTION AGENDA

Mr. Boyer asked each board member to provide their thoughts at this point regarding the issue of masks:

Mrs. Flynn stated that she loves everything about Sculptor. Safety on all sides needs to be considered. Masks make it difficult for social engagement and people do touch masks frequently. For some people, even the thought of being sick affects their well-being. But, she believed that safety needed to be considered on both sides.

Mr. Gaenicke agreed that this issue is difficult for both sides. He stated that everyone here on the board cares about children, but are not trying to raise the children for their parents. He continued that there is no 100% solution unless you live in a home like a hermit. The board is just trying to do their best to keep kids and staff safe and secure.

Mrs. O'Sullivan said that this is a very hard decision and she wanted everyone to know that we are here for the kids. She said that she loves Sculptor and it is her Camelot. But, we need to follow the science of safety. She stated that her grandkids in California wear masks. She said she is leaning towards requiring masks as last year. She said it seemed to make a difference.

Mrs. Murphy said that she is concerned about this issue of face masks. As a former teacher, she said we should err on the side of safety. She thought that if we implemented a short-term mask policy, such as 90 days, it might make a difference. She recognized that students with disabilities might need a different route.

Mr. Richardson stated that this was a tough decision, but that Sculptor provides a great learning environment.

Mr. Boyer said that he has been involved with Sculptor since before day 1 and that his wife works here. He believed we need to focus on safety and in the best interest of the kids. He stated that he is not a proponent of mandates and that masks are one tool. They do not fit everything, but masks do help. He wasn't sure who to believe when following the science. Two leaders recently left the CDC. He questioned the right way to handle this and said that masks are not "the end all get all." He thought that if we did implement a mask policy, it should only be until the end of the semester – BPS was implementing their policy for 90 days. Our policy could be reviewed and the mask requirement dropped if cases dropped below a certain number per 100,000. Again, he suggested that if we did implement a mask policy, it could end at the semester, but if the limit of cases was reached, per the CDC/Department of Health, he or Mrs. Bernhard could end the requirement of masks. He also stated that last year Sculptor allowed both face masks and face shields; BPS did not allow for face shields.

Mr. Boyer further stated that the board had received many emails from parents. More were actually pro masks, whereas here at this meeting, everyone was against a mask requirement.

Mrs. Schell, Teacher Representative, wondered if an option could be for just the staff to wear masks and not mask the students. She questioned whether there would be an opt out option for parents. She stated that she would rather, as an adult, wear a mask, rather than her children.

Mr. Boyer then questioned whether we should do what we did last year, which was require masks and perform temperature checks in the car loop, or follow what BPS recently instated (which was to require masks for all, but allowed for parents to opt out with a doctor's note; policy is for 90 days, with a review every 30 days).

Mr. Gaenicke stated he thought we should do what we did last year for 60 days, then see what the numbers look like.

Mr. Boyer asked for a motion to be made. Mrs. Bernhard asked to speak before a motion was made. She stated that in all of last year, we had 30 positive cases of Covid with zero spread within the school. All cases were from contact to family/community members. In addition, 144 students were quarantined throughout the entire school year. This year, as of August 31, 2021 at 1:30pm, we had 47 total positive cases, with 185 students that have had to be quarantined. She stated that this year, we have had spread within the school. It was spreading through several classes.

Mr. Boyer called again for a motion. Mr. Gaenicke made a motion to reinstitute the policy that was followed last year until Christmas break – with the option to end it earlier, depending on the number from the Department of Health.

Mr. Boyer repeated the motion made by Mr. Gaenicke, but stated masks will be requested, not required. Mrs. Bernhard pointed out to Mr. Boyer that last year masks or face shields were required for all students and staff.

Mr. Boyer asked the board members if they were OK with request instead of require. Mrs. Flynn, Mr. Gaenicke, and Mr. Richardson stated they were OK with request instead of require. Mrs. O'Sullivan and Mrs. Murphy said they were not OK with request. Mrs. Murphy further stated that masks should be required and face shields removed.

Mr. Boyer repeated the motion made by Mr. Gaenicke as follows: Reinstate the policy that was followed last year until Christmas break – with the option to end it earlier, depending on the number of cases from the Department of Health, except masks will be requested and not required (Gaenicke/Richardson).

Mrs. O'Sullivan asked for there to be discussion prior to the vote on the motion. Due to technology issues, it was very difficult for the board members that were participating virtually to hear the motion. Mrs. O'Sullivan said requesting that masks be worn instead of requiring them would mean that masks would still be voluntary. She emphasized that we need to get control. Mrs. Murphy also stated that masks should be required.

Mr. Boyer called for a vote on the motion – that masks would be requested, not required. Mrs. Flynn, Mr. Gaenicke, and Mr. Richardson voted yes; Mrs. O'Sullivan and Mrs. Murphy voted no. Motion carried.

There being no further business, meeting adjourned at 7:56am.

Respectfully submitted,

Reneé Bernhard
Principal

